



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

## Public Library

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Monday, February 13, 2006

**MEDIA CONTACT:** Arian Collins

619-236-5848

### **Author Joanne Oppenheim to Discuss New Book About Legendary San Diego City Librarian Clara Breed**

*Book Chronicles Breed's Correspondence with Interred Japanese American Children*

SAN DIEGO – The City of San Diego Public Library will present author Joanne Oppenheim, who will discuss her new book “Dear Miss Breed,” on Thursday, Feb. 23 at 6 p.m. at the Central Library. The event is free and open to the public.

“Dear Miss Breed” is an account of how a remarkable librarian, Clara Breed, became a lifeline to “her children,” as she called the middle- and high school aged Japanese-Americans of San Diego whom she had come to know and love. Clara Estelle Breed (1906-94) worked at the San Diego Public Library for 42 years, including the last 24 years as City librarian. Soon after Pearl Harbor was attacked by Japan in 1941, people of Japanese ancestry living in the United States were sent to internment camps for the duration of the war. At the time, Ms. Breed was the City’s children’s librarian and she became an outspoken opponent of the injustice. During the war, Breed corresponded regularly with Japanese-American children from San Diego and sent them books and other necessities.

Ms. Breed wrote articles for national publications that criticized the injustice of the camps and the federal program. At the time of national hysteria and nationalistic fervor for the war effort, her actions were very brave. She could have easily been the victim of public backlash. But she stood by her convictions and recognized not only the importance of speaking out but also of bringing some comfort to the families in the camps.

“We at the San Diego Public Library are very proud of Miss Breed and we are honored and delighted that Ms. Oppenheim’s book will educate the public about Miss Breed’s bravery and generosity,” said City Library Director Anna Tatár. “Although ‘Dear Miss Breed’ is intended for young adults, it is a very important book and I recommend it be read by people of all ages.”

**The publication of Ms. Oppenheim’s book coincides with Clara Breed’s 100<sup>th</sup> birthday.** The Feb. 23 event is the official launch of “Dear Miss Breed” from Scholastic Press. The event will be co-sponsored by the Japanese American Historical Society of San Diego and will be held in the third floor auditorium of the Central Library, located at 820 E St. in downtown San Diego. For more information, call 619-238-6681 or visit the Library on the City’s Web site at <http://www.sandiego.gov/public-library>. **Please call for reservations!**

###

*The City of San Diego Public Library – Your Link to the Past and Gateway to the Future*